

Preface

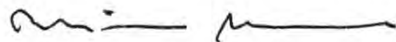
On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Council of Europe Conferences of Ministers responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning (CEMAT) this collection of texts adopted by the conferences since 1970 offers readers an overview of both co-operation activities regarding spatial/regional planning policies in Europe and the fundamental principles on which these policies are based.

Spatial/regional planning is at the same time a scientific discipline, an administrative technique and an interdisciplinary approach in which society's economic, social, cultural and ecological policies come together. It aims to foster both territorial cohesion and public well-being through improvement of the collective living environment. The goals thus reflect the Council of Europe's key role of promoting human rights and democracy.

Spatial/regional planning is by nature transversal, and goes beyond the national context. The CEMAT has worked at the level of a now united continent to promote debate, to share best practice and to develop principles and guidelines for sustainable territorial policies.

The wealth of information and the body of instruments contained in this volume are of considerable value at a juncture when Europe is confronted with new economic, ecological, social and geopolitical challenges. Its publication coincides with the holding of the 15th ministerial conference of the CEMAT entitled "Future Challenges: Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent in a Changing World" (Moscow, 8-9 July 2010).

The co-operation initiated 40 years ago will continue to develop and evolve. Indeed, it is perhaps now more essential than ever before as a means of giving a direction to the public authorities' increasingly complex activities in this field and ultimately helping to improve the quality of life for the people of Europe.



Thorbjørn JAGLAND

Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Introduction

The Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning: a territorial dimension of human rights

“The Territory is a complex system, comprising not only urbanised, rural and other spaces, eg industrial land, but nature as a whole and the environment surrounding humankind. It is the bearing ground and indispensable framework of human dwelling and activity, and therefore the basis of sustainable development... The spatial development approach is an essential method of achieving the sustainable development objective.”

Ljubljana Declaration on the territorial dimension of spatial development, adopted by the 13th Ministerial Conference of the CEMAT, 17 September 2003

The Council of Europe actively promotes sustainable development in line with Recommendation Rec(2002)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the Guiding principles for sustainable spatial development of the European continent, which were adopted initially by the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning (CEMAT). The Action Plan adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the 3rd Council of Europe Summit in Warsaw, on 17 May 2005, includes a section on “Promoting sustainable development” which provides that: “We are committed to improving the quality of life for citizens. The Council of Europe shall therefore, on the basis of the existing instruments, further develop and support integrated policies in the fields of environment, landscape, spatial planning and prevention and management of natural disasters, in a sustainable development perspective”.

This involves establishing a new integrated spatial development policy which fosters social, economic and territorial cohesion, the preservation of nature and the cultural heritage, an improved living environment and more balanced competitiveness of territory. In this connection, standard-setting work concerning the natural, cultural and landscape heritage – that is, both nature and the work of humankind – has been in progress for over 50 years. Five conventions which can be described as “heritage” conventions have been adopted by the Council of Europe to date. In chronological order, they are as follows:

- the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (ETS No. 66), opened for signature in London on 6 May 1969, revised in Valletta (ETS No. 143), Malta on 16 January 1992;
- the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (ETS No. 104), opened for signature in Bern, Switzerland on 19 September 1979;
- the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (ETS No. 121), opened for signature in Grenada, Spain on 3 October 1985;
- the European Landscape Convention (ETS No, 176), opened for signature in Florence, Italy on 20 October 2000;

- the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (CETS No. 199), opened for signature in Faro, Portugal on 27 October 2005.

The many resolutions and recommendations issued by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to the Organisation's member states have also guided European policies in this area and have played a part in preparing, interpreting or expanding the international conventions.

The CEMAT of the Council of Europe brings together representatives of the Council's member states in pursuit of a shared objective: sustainable spatial development of the European continent.

The CEMAT is a forum for considering issues of sustainable spatial development and a platform for exchanging and disseminating information. It is the only framework for pan-European co-operation on spatial development policies within which members and non-members of the European Union can gather on an equal footing at the level of Greater Europe. The Council of Europe's activities relating to spatial planning began in 1970 in Bonn with the 1st session of the CEMAT. They originated in concerns raised from the early 1960s by the then Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, which were reflected in the presentation in May 1968 of a historic report: "Regional planning – a European problem". The activities conducted since then have seen the adoption of several basic documents which have shaped European governments' spatial development policies:

- the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter, adopted at the 6th Session of the CEMAT in Torremolinos in 1983 and incorporated in Recommendation (84) 2 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter;
- the European Regional Planning Strategy presented at the 8th Session of the CEMAT in Lausanne in 1988;
- the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent, adopted at the 12th Session of the CEMAT in Hanover in 2000 and incorporated in Recommendation (2002) 1 by the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent (GPSSDEC-CEMAT).

The various activities have been conducted in close liaison with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

1. The concept of regional/spatial planning

According to the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter:

"Regional/spatial planning gives geographical expression to the economic, social, cultural and ecological policies of society. It is at the same time a scientific discipline, an administrative technique and a policy developed as an interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach directed towards a balanced regional development and the physical organisation of space according to an overall strategy."

The Charter refers to the European dimension and the specific characteristics of regional/spatial planning:

Its European dimension: Regional/spatial planning contributes to a better spatial organisation in Europe and to finding solutions to problems which go beyond the national framework, and thus aims to create a feeling of common identity, bearing in mind North/South and East/West relations.

Its characteristics: Humankind and its well-being as well as its interaction with the environment are the central concern of regional/spatial planning, whose aims are to provide each individual with an environment and quality of life conducive to the development of her or his personality in surroundings planned on a human scale.

Regional/spatial planning should be democratic, comprehensive, functional and oriented towards the longer term:

- democratic: it should be conducted in such a way as to ensure the participation of the people concerned and their political representatives;
- comprehensive: it should ensure the co-ordination of the various sectoral policies and integrate them in an overall approach;
- functional: it needs to take account of the existence of regional consciousness based on common values, culture and interests sometimes crossing administrative and territorial boundaries, while taking account of the institutional arrangements of the different countries;
- long-term oriented: it should analyse and take into consideration the long-term trends and developments of economic, social, cultural, ecological and environmental phenomena and interventions.

Its operation: Regional/spatial planning should take into consideration the existence of a multitude of individual and institutional decision-makers who influence the organisation of space, the uncertainty of all forecasting studies, market pressures, special features of administrative systems and different socio-economic and environmental conditions. It must, however, strive to reconcile these influences in the most harmonious way possible.

The fundamental objectives identified in the Charter are as follows:

- balanced socio-economic development of the regions;
- improvement of the quality of life;
- responsible management of natural resources and protection of the environment;
- rational use of land.

Implementation of regional/spatial planning objectives: The achievement of regional/spatial planning objectives is essentially a political matter. Many private and public agencies contribute by their actions to developing and changing the organisation of space. Regional/spatial planning reflects the desire for interdisciplinary integration and co-ordination and for co-operation between the authorities involved. It also requires public participation.

2. The Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent

Recommendation Rec(2002)1 of the Committee of Ministers states that the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent are the following:

- a major contribution towards implementation of the strategy of social cohesion adopted at the 2nd Summit of Heads of State and Government of Council of Europe member states in 1997;
- a policy framework document which takes into account the relevant activities of the Council of Europe and its bodies, and in particular the work of its Parliamentary Assembly and its Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, in the area of continental spatial development policy and which could contribute to strengthening the European integration process by means of transfrontier, inter-regional and transnational co-operation;
- a coherent strategy for the integrated and regionally balanced development of our continent, which, while based on the principles of subsidiarity and reciprocity, strengthens competitiveness, co-operation and solidarity among local and regional authorities across borders, thereby making a contribution to democratic stability in Europe.

The Committee of Ministers recommends that member states should use the Guiding Principles as a basis for planning and spatial development measures, implement them in spatial development projects as appropriate and continue establishing administrative bodies at regional and governmental levels in order to facilitate better spatial integration of the various regions of Europe.

The Guiding Principles have six chapters and refer to the main European legal instruments of relevance to spatial planning.

Content of the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent

- I. *Contribution of the guiding principles to the implementation of the social cohesion policy of the Council of Europe*
- II. *Spatial development policies in Europe: new continent-wide challenges and prospects*
 1. *Intercontinental relationships as strategic elements for European spatial development policy*
 2. *The multiplicity of cultures*
 3. *Large European regions as a basis for mutual support and co-operation*
 4. *Integration of the old and new member states*
- III. *Specific role of the private sector in spatial development*

- IV. *Principles of a planning policy for sustainable development in Europe*
 1. *Promoting territorial cohesion through a more balanced social and economic development of regions and improved competitiveness*
 2. *Encouraging development generated by urban functions and improving the relationship between the town and the countryside*
 3. *Promoting more balanced accessibility*
 4. *Developing access to information and knowledge*
 5. *Reducing environmental damage*
 6. *Enhancing and protecting natural resources and the natural heritage*
 7. *Enhancing the cultural heritage as a factor for development*
 8. *Developing energy resources while maintaining safety*
 9. *Encouraging high quality, sustainable tourism*
 10. *Limitation of the impact of natural disasters*
- V. *Spatial development measures for different types of European regions*
 1. *Landscapes*
 2. *Urban areas*
 3. *Rural areas*
 4. *Mountains*
 5. *Coastal and island regions*
 6. *Eurocorridors*
 7. *Flood plains and water meadows*
 8. *Redundant industrial and military sites*
 9. *Border regions*
- VI. *Strengthening of co-operation between the member states of the Council of Europe and participation of regions, municipalities and citizens*
 1. *Possibilities of conceiving a development-oriented spatial planning*
 2. *Developing Europe-wide co-operation activities on the basis of the guiding principles*
 3. *Horizontal co-operation*
 4. *Vertical co-operation*
 5. *Broadly-based participation of society in the spatial planning process*

The main European legal instruments of relevance to spatial planning are the following:

- the European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 18) (Paris, France, 19 December 1954);
- the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (ETS No. 104) (Bern, Switzerland, 19 September 1979);
- the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities (ETS No. 106) (Madrid, Spain, 21 May 1980) and its additional protocols;
- the Florence Charter on the protection of historic parks and gardens (Icomos-Ifla, 1982);
- the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter (Torremolinos, Spain, 20 May 1983);
- the Convention on the Conservation of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (ETS No. 121) (Grenada, Spain, 3 October 1985);
- the European Charter of Local Self-Government (Strasbourg, France, 15 October 1985);
- the Convention on the Protection of the Alps (Salzburg, Austria, 7 November 1991);
- the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (ETS No. 143) (revised) (Valletta, Malta, 16 January 1992);
- the draft European Charter of Regional Self-Government, 5 June 1997;
- the Baltic 21 (Nyborg, Denmark, June 1998);
- the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) (Potsdam, Germany, May 1999);
- the European Landscape Convention (ETS No. 176) (Florence, Italy, 20 October 2000).

In accordance with the concept of sustainability, the Guiding Principles take into account the needs of all the inhabitants of Europe's regions, without compromising the fundamental rights and development prospects of future generations. They aim in particular at bringing the economic and social requirements to be met by the territory into harmony with its ecological and cultural functions and therefore contributing to long-term, large-scale and balanced spatial development. Their implementation therefore requires close co-operation between spatial planning and sectoral policies, which, through the measures they involve, influence the spatial structures in Europe.

The Guiding Principles also take account of international co-operation at world level, as co-ordinated by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable

Development. The Council of Europe presented the Guiding Principles at the United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 as a contribution to the United Nations Agenda 21 programme adopted in Rio de Janeiro and to the start of an intercontinental dialogue.

3. Implementation of the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent

The 13th Session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning (Ljubljana, 16-17 September 2003) was a milestone in the implementation of the strategies and perspectives for the sustainable spatial development of the European continent. The Ljubljana Declaration on the territorial dimension of spatial development is of crucial importance as regards what may be described as the human right to sustainable development. With a view to the management of the major challenges for sustainable spatial development of the European continent, it states that the relevant policies should be further improved in order to support the balanced polycentric development of the European continent and the formation of functional urban regions, including networks of small and medium-sized towns and rural settlements.

The declaration provides that “Sustainable development is not just an environmental issue. Three aspects of sustainable development have been agreed upon: economic sustainability, environmental sustainability and social sustainability. The first implies economic growth and development, the second includes ecosystem integrity and attention to carrying capacity and biodiversity, whilst the latter includes values such as equity, empowerment, accessibility and participation. In addition to these three components, the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent introduced a fourth dimension: that of cultural sustainability”.

The declaration also provides that the ministers of the member states of the Council of Europe responsible for regional/spatial planning commit themselves to report every three years to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the implementation of the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent. A method for standardising monitoring of the implementation of the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent has been drawn up with a view to assessing the spatial development policies of the Council of Europe’s member states.

At the ministerial conference, the ministers:

- took note of the European Rural Heritage Observation Guide adopted by the CEMAT Committee of Senior Officials in March 2003. Its purpose is to take account of all cultural, natural and landscape aspects of the rural heritage, both tangible and intangible, in their full diversity as factors in and driving forces for development;
- adopted resolutions concerning sustainable development: Resolution No. 1 on public-private partnerships in spatial development policy, Resolution No. 2 on the training of authorities responsible for sustainable development and Resolution No. 3 concerning the prevention of floods and better co-ordination of all activities designed to minimise the risks and the consequences of disastrous floods;

– took note of the work carried out with a view to the sustainable spatial development of the Tisza/Tisa river basin, as reflected in the signature of the Initiative on the Sustainable Spatial Development of the Tisza/Tisa River Basin by the ministers responsible for regional/spatial planning of Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine and the adoption of the Declaration on co-operation concerning the Tisza/Tisa river basin by the same states at the conference.

The 14th Session of the CEMAT was on the theme of “Networks for sustainable spatial development of the European continent: bridges over Europe” (Lisbon, Portugal, 2006). The following texts geared towards sustainable development were adopted:

- the Lisbon Declaration on networks for sustainable spatial development of the European continent: bridges over Europe;
- Resolution No. 1 on polycentric development: promoting competitiveness, enhancing cohesion;
- Resolution No. 2 on territorial governance: empowerment through enhanced co-ordination;
- Resolution No. 3 on the territorial agenda of the European Union and its relation to CEMAT.

The ministers also took note of the following documents:

- general national reports on the implementation of Recommendation Rec(2002)1 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the Guiding Principles on Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent (GPSSDEC-CEMAT);
- national reports on the follow-up to Resolution No. 3 concerning the prevention of floods and better co-ordination of all activities designed to minimise the risks and consequences of disastrous floods, adopted at the 13th Session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT/CoE), in Ljubljana, on 17 September 2003;
- CEMAT Glossary of key expressions used in spatial development policies in Europe;
- CEMAT Pan-European Compendium on national spatial planning policies.

In keeping with the cross-sectoral approach to sustainable development, the Council of Europe held the following seminars and conferences between 2001 and 2010¹ under the work programme of the CEMAT Committee of Senior Officials:

¹. The proceedings of the meetings are published in the Council of Europe’s Spatial Planning and Landscape series and are available on the CEMAT website.

- “Integration of the greater European spaces”, Thessaloniki, Greece, 25-26 June 2001;
- “Landscape heritage, spatial planning and sustainable development”, Lisbon, Portugal, 26-27 November 2001;
- “The role of local and regional authorities in transnational co-operation in the field of regional/spatial development”, Dresden, Germany, 15-16 May 2002 (in co-operation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe);
- “Spatial planning for the sustainable development of particular types of European areas: mountains, coastal zones, rural zones, flood-plains and alluvial valleys”, Sofia, Bulgaria, 23-24 October 2002;
- “Sustainable spatial development: strengthening intersectoral relations”, Budapest, Hungary, 26-27 March 2003 (in co-operation with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research – UNITAR);
- “Natural disasters and sustainable spatial development: prevention of floods”, Wrocław, Poland, 30 June 2003;
- “Spatial development governance: institutional co-operation network”, Yerevan, 28-29 October 2004;
- “The role of training in the implementation of the policy of sustainable spatial development at local and regional levels in Europe”, Strasbourg, 15 March 2004 (in co-operation with the European Network of Training Organisations for Local and Regional Authorities (ENTO), the Committee on Sustainable Development of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the European Federation of Local Government Chief Executives (UDITE));
- “Urban management in networking Europe”, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 17-18 November 2005;
- “Sharing responsibility for our region: redefining the public interest for territorial development”, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 22-23 May 2006 (organised in co-operation with the authorities of the Slovak Republic and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe as part of the CEMAT activities);
- “The accessibility and attractiveness of rural and landlocked areas: sustainable transport and services of general interest”, Andorra la Vella, Andorra, 25-26 October 2007;
- “Challenges and strategies for metropolises and metropolitan regions, in a context of growing globalisation with regard to economic, social, environmental and cultural development”, St Petersburg, Russian Federation, 26-27 June 2008;

- “The spatial dimension of human rights: for a new culture of territory”, Yerevan, Armenia, 13-14 October 2008;
- “A comprehensive approach to balanced sustainable spatial development of the European Continent”, Kyiv, Ukraine, 11 June 2009.

The 15th Session of the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning on “Challenges of the Future: Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent in a Changing World” will be organised in the Russian Federation in 2010.

The following issues will be examined:

- demography, migration and their territorial impacts;
- territorial impacts in Europe of the new energy paradigm (energy supply, conservation and security, new geography of energy systems);
- territorial impacts of the accelerating globalisation process;
- creation of new transport and trading corridors (including maritime transport) and Europe-wide sustainable integration. Access to essential services;
- territorial impacts of climate change; adaptation, management and prevention measures, especially in relation to natural hazards;
- the role of spatial development policies for environmental sustainability, human surroundings and terrestrial and maritime landscape protection and enhancement;
- transfrontier interactions and territorial integration of the European Continent.

It is planned to organise the 16th Session of the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning in France in 2013.

As Mr Francisco Nunes Correia, Minister for Environment, Spatial Planning and Regional Development of Portugal and President of the 14th CEMAT Session said, “The Ministers of the CEMAT are the ‘guardian of the European Territory’ and, as such, it is their duty to leave to future generations a more balanced, better integrated and territorially more cohesive continent, but one which is more competitive and sustainable and provides quality of life to all its inhabitants”.

Maguelonne Dejeant-Pons
Executive Secretary of the CEMAT, Council of Europe

Website of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning (CEMAT): www.coe.int/CEMAT

I. Texts adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe concerning the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning (CEMAT-Council of Europe)

Recommendation No. R (84) 2 of the Committee of Ministers to the Member States of the Council of Europe on the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter (Torremolinos Charter)

Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 25 January 1984 at the 366th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Recognising that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social progress;

Having regard to Consultative Assembly Resolution 687 (1979) on European regional planning;

Having regard to the opinion of the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe on the preparation of a European Regional Planning Charter appended to its Resolution 113 (1980) on the progress of European integration;

Considering that regional/spatial planning is a tool which is important to the progress of European society and that closer international co-operation in this field is a valuable means of strengthening European identity;

Convinced that in order to achieve co-operation in this field it is necessary to analyse national, regional and local conceptions of regional/spatial planning with a view to the adoption of common principles (designed, in particular, to reduce regional disparities) and hence to the achievement of a better general conception of the use and organisation of space, the distribution of activities, environmental protection and the improvement of the quality of life;

Convinced that the radical changes which have occurred in the economic and social patterns of the European countries and in their relations with other parts of the world make it necessary to review the principles governing the organisation of space in order to ensure that they are not formulated solely on the basis of short-term economic objectives without due consideration for social, cultural and environmental factors;

Considering that the objectives of regional/spatial planning necessitate new criteria for the choice of the direction in which technical progress is pursued and the use to which it is put, and that these criteria need to be in keeping with economic, social and environmental requirements;

Convinced that all European citizens should have the opportunity in an appropriate institutional framework to take part in the devising and implementation of all regional/spatial planning measures,

Recommends that the governments of member states:

a. base their national policies on the principles and objectives set out in the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter prepared and adopted by the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning and appended to this recommendation;

b. ensure that the Charter is distributed as widely as possible among the public and among politicians at local, regional, national and international level.

Appendix to Recommendation No. R (84) 2

The European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter

The concept of regional/spatial planning

Regional/spatial planning gives geographical expression to the economic, social, cultural and ecological policies of society.

It is at the same time a scientific discipline, an administrative technique and a policy developed as an interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach directed towards a balanced regional development and the physical organisation of space according to an overall strategy.

Its European dimension

Regional/spatial planning contributes to a better spatial organisation in Europe and to the finding of solutions for problems which go beyond the national framework and thus aims to create a feeling of common identity, having regard to North–South and East–West relations.

Its characteristics

Man and his well-being, as well as his interaction with the environment, are the central concern of regional/spatial planning, its aims being to provide each individual with an environment and quality of life conducive to the development of his personality in surroundings planned on a human scale.

Regional/spatial planning should be democratic, comprehensive, functional and orientated towards the longer term.

Democratic: it should be conducted in such a way as to ensure the participation of the people concerned and their political representatives,

Comprehensive: it should ensure the co-ordination of the various sectoral policies and integrate them in an overall approach,

- Functional: it needs to take account of the existence of regional consciousness based on common values, culture and interests sometimes crossing administrative and territorial boundaries, while taking account of institutional arrangements of the different countries,
- Long-term orientated: it should analyse and take into consideration the long-term trends and developments of economic, social, cultural, ecological and environmental phenomena and interventions.

Its operation

Regional/spatial planning must take into consideration the existence of a multitude of individual and institutional decision-makers which influence the organisation of space, the uncertainty of all forecasting studies, the market pressures, the special features of administrative systems and the differing socio-economic and environmental conditions.

It must however strive to reconcile these influences in the most harmonious way possible.

The fundamental objectives

Regional/spatial planning seeks at one and the same time to achieve four aims.

Balanced socio-economic development of the regions

Taking into consideration the economic processes affecting Europe as a whole, the specific regional characteristics and the important role of development axes and communication networks, it should control the growth of regions which are congested or developing too fast, encourage the development of backward regions, and maintain or adapt the infrastructures that are essential to the stimulation of economic recovery in declining regions or those threatened with serious employment problems, particularly through manpower migration at European level. Peripheral areas which have special requirements and structural potential for socio-economic rebalancing should be better linked up to the industrial and economic centres of Europe.

Improvement of the quality of life

It encourages improvement in the quality of everyday life, in respect of housing, work, culture, leisure or relationships within human communities, and the enhancement of the well-being of each individual through the creation of jobs and the provision of economic, social and cultural amenities which meet the aspirations of different sections of the population and which are sited in places where they will be used to the optimum.

Responsible management of natural resources and protection of the environment

By promoting strategies to minimise conflicts between the growing demand for natural resources and the need to conserve them, it seeks to ensure responsible

management of the environment, the resources of land, subsoil, air, water, energy resources, fauna and flora, paying special attention to areas of natural beauty and to the cultural and architectural heritage.

Rational use of land

In pursuit of the above defined objectives, it is concerned in particular with the location, organisation and development of large urban and industrial complexes, major infrastructures, and the protection of agricultural and forestry land. Every regional/spatial planning policy must be necessarily accompanied by a land-use policy in order to make it possible to achieve objectives which are in the public interest.

Implementation of regional/spatial planning objectives

The achievement of regional/spatial planning objectives is essentially a political matter.

Many private and public agencies contribute by their actions to developing and changing the organisation of space. Regional/spatial planning reflects the desire for interdisciplinary integration and co-ordination, and for co-operation between the authorities involved.

It seeks co-ordination between the various sectors

This effort for co-ordination concerns mainly the distribution of population, economic activities, habitat, public facilities and power supplies; transport; water supply and purification noise prevention and waste disposal; protection of the environment and of natural, historical, cultural assets and resources.

It facilitates co-ordination and co-operation between the various levels of decision-making and the equalisation of financial resources

The various authorities involved in regional/spatial planning policy need to be given the power to take and carry out decisions, as well as adequate financial means. In order to ensure optimal co-ordination between local, regional, national and European levels, also as regards transfrontier co-operation, their action must always take into account any measures introduced or planned at the level above or below their own and, consequently, they must keep one another regularly informed.

At local level: co-ordination of local authority development plans, having regard to the essential interests of regional and national planning;

At regional level: the most appropriate level at which to pursue a regional/spatial planning policy, co-ordination between the regional authorities themselves and local and national authorities, as well as between regions of neighbouring countries;

At national level: co-ordination of different regional/spatial planning policies and regional aid arrangements as well as harmonisation of the national and regional objectives;

At European level: co-ordination of regional/spatial planning policies in order to achieve objectives of European importance and general balanced development.

Public participation

Any regional/spatial planning policy, at whatever level, must be based on active citizen participation. It is essential that the citizen be informed clearly and in a comprehensive way at all stages of the planning process and in the framework of institutional structures and procedures.

Strengthening European co-operation

The European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT) constitutes the ideal political instrument for co-operation and initiative at European level.

– It will intensify relations with the bodies of the Council of Europe and the European Community, as well as with the relevant intergovernmental organisations. It will present regular progress reports on European co-operation in this field to the Parliamentary Assembly and the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe.

– Besides organising and intensifying political co-operation between states, it will promote co-operation in the main technical planning fields such as long-range forecasting, regional statistics, cartography and terminology. It must acquire the scientific, administrative, technical and financial tools essential to the pursuit of its aims, in particular by drawing up a European regional planning concept.

The ministers ask all institutions, administrations and organisations dealing with regional planning problems to have regard in their work to the contents of the Charter.

The Charter can be revised with a view to adapting it to the needs of European society.

The ministers undertake to recommend to their respective governments that the principles and aims set forth in the Charter be taken into consideration and that international co-operation be promoted with a view to achieving real European planning.

Appendix to the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter

Specific objectives

All principles set down in the present Charter have already been developed in the work of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning on rural, urban, frontier, mountain and coastal areas, and on islands.

Rural areas with a primarily agricultural function have a fundamental role to play. It is essential to create acceptable living conditions in the countryside, as regards all economic, social, cultural and ecological aspects as well as infrastructures and amenities, while distinguishing between under-developed and peripheral rural regions and those close to large conurbations.

In such areas the development of the urban framework, of social and economic structures and of transport must take account, in all spheres, of their specific functions and in particular of the conservation and management of the natural landscape.

Urban areas contribute greatly to the development of Europe and usually present the problem of controlling their growth.

A balanced urban structure requires the systematic implementation of plans for land use and the application of guidelines for the development of economic activities for the benefit of the living conditions of town dwellers.

Special attention should be paid to the improvement of living conditions, the promotion of public transport and to all measures to curb the excessive movement of population away from the town centres to the periphery.

The rehabilitation of the architectural heritage, monuments and sites must be an integral part of an overall town and country planning policy.

Frontier areas, more than all others, need a policy of co-ordination between states. The purpose of such a policy is to open up the frontiers and institute transfrontier consultation and co-operation and joint use of infrastructure facilities. States should facilitate direct contacts between the regions and localities concerned in accordance with the European Outline Convention on transfrontier co-operation between territorial authorities in order to promote increasingly close contacts between the populations concerned.

In frontier areas, no project which could have harmful consequences for the environment of neighbouring countries should be carried out without previous consultation of those states.

Mountain areas: In view of the importance of these areas for the ecological, economic, social, cultural and agricultural functions they fulfil and their value as depositories of natural resources, and of the many constraints from which they suffer in these fields of activity, spatial management policy must give special and suitable consideration to the preservation and development of mountain regions.

Regions with structural weaknesses where living and working conditions have made little progress, particularly for historical reasons, or which could be left behind by changes in their economic base, need special assistance related to the disparities which exist between living and working conditions within the various states.

Regions in decline: Specific policies should be developed in favour of regions where economic activity has strongly slowed down following industrial restructuring and ageing of their infrastructure and of their industrial equipment, very often monostructured. This situation is accelerated by the worldwide competition resulting from the new international division of labour.

Coastal areas and islands: The development of mass tourism and transport in Europe and the industrialisation of coastal areas, islands and the sea, demand specific policies for these regions in order to ensure their balanced development and coordinated urbanisation, bearing in mind the requirements of environmental conservation and regional characteristics. Regard must be given to the specific role and functions of coastal areas in the land-sea relationship and of sea-transport possibilities.